

## Architectural drawing: the agent of rupture

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In the following paper I examine the potential of architectural drawing as an agent of rupture of any given set of conditions. To rupture given conditions is to open the world, open for its possible transformations. The architectural drawing is understood here as a materialized architectural object, not as an intermediate step which precedes the execution of built architecture.

Why is this important?

Currently, the architecture is realized on demand and when realized it functions as a service to reproduce the world as it is (De Graf, 2017; Deamer, 2015; Frampton 2005). Thus to act as an architect is primarily to receive the commission to meet client requirements which leads to the profession dead end - **if there is no commission to design there is no architecture**. It results in a culture of adaptability – architects are advised to adapt to given conditions or to foresee future conditions in order to offer solutions to acute problems. In this case, the exterior conditions under which architecture is conceived are taken as terminal, unchangeable. The danger here is that the very conditions are not brought under the questioning. The architects instead of finding architectural questions and testing architectural hypothesis align with the continuum of the world as it is given.

On the opposite **architectural drawing allows architect to operate uninvited**. Le Corbusier compared the drawing with the entering of the house of a stranger. The drawing is thus an act of an intruder; by drawing we intrude the reality which is (over)drawn. By drawing we also enter an unknown territory. “To enter is to see, not to see a static object, a fixed place or an inert world, but to see, architecture as an event” (Colomina, 1994). Most importantly architectural drawing can be exercised anywhere. It can territorialize any real or imaginary place regardless of the standard categories of ownership, legislations, and managerial plans. The drawing occupies place in a way to turn it in a place of architectural thinking. If architecture is theorization of space (Vidler, 2015), architectural drawing is the material proof of such practice.

What is the function of architectural drawing?

This process of looking at the outside world with an internalized look of an architect is materialized across photography, modelling, writing, drawing, diagrams, collages, graphics, etc.

With each and every architectural concept/act, the architects are producing the material from the empty spot. What is this empty spot? When architecture is practiced as a creative thinking practice, which means, without a prescription, the empty spot is its starting point and it is the place of perpetual uncertainty. The empty spot is never definitely filled with certainty, because over and over again, same questions are raised: **How do architects know that they are on the right track? What is telling them that the concept they work on is the adequate one?** The truth is – nothing, there is no assurance on the correctness of the concept. But the empty spot can be balanced with the architectural techniques and modes of expression. Architect’s only alliance is found in the tools and techniques of materialisation of the idea: the model, the sketch, the text, re-models, re-drawing, re-writing, the cycle of testing concepts is infinite. “Le Corbusier has, for example, enigmatic trait of sketching his own projects again and again, even long after they have been built. He redraws not only his own photographs but also those he found in newspapers, catalogues, postcards.” (Colomina, 2004: p. 98). We can read an interesting trait here – as soon as his object becomes the part of the exterior reality Courbisier continues to manipulate and re-construct the reality where his object is included. The built object is not a finished project. It is idea realized which needs revision. The built object, being part of reality enters again the domain of questioning in the re-drawing practice.

Now, if photographic image does not simply reproduce, drawing likewise does not simply record – it is the process where the reconstruction of the given context takes place. The drawing is inscribed on “the outside reality”, to appropriate it. Then, after the concept-drawing is constructed, it becomes the object of the outside

world, and stares right back at us from the outside world. It is when the process of reflection and reconstruction on the drawing itself begins; it is how we insert and test architectural cracks in world-as-it-is. The drawing is an architectural tool for reconstructing the given, and by redrawing the existing reality we already enter into its reconstruction.

Instead of the repetitive production of one type of world, the transformative practice rearranges each given world. The existing context reconfigured emerges in an unexpected way; it is transformed from the world as it is to an open world. And this is never ending, elliptic process.

On the other hand by drawing that which is not yet present in the existing – by drawing object of architecture – architect materialize it in the given context – that is to say, we made architecture visible, present. The act of drawing is in this way similar to the act of the ruined object. Both interrupt the given reality, both materialize the point of distinction from what can be “objectively recorded” in the world-as-it-is, both operate by the logic unfamiliar to the reality classifications.

A good case in point are Sverre Fehn’s drawings. All too often architects stop at describing them as “poetic”. Instead, what if we ask who is the user of architecture depicted in his drawings, or who is the user of the drawing outside the drawing, the one who looks at it? Does one see oneself differently in the world after seeing oneself inhabiting architecture in Sverre Fehn drawing? Sverre Fehn user is the inhabitant, the one who inhabits the world differently after seen oneself inhabiting the drawing.

Or to take the example the drawings Japanese architects (Sejima, Ishigami, Fujimoto, etc), not only as a subtle illustrations, but ask what people do there, when they inhabit the drawing (by seeing it)? Can we identify what they do by the program prescriptions used in contemporary building? No, the people there are living in architecture, (which is living in nature) not in the prescribed categories of the world-as-it-is.

What does this drawing do when placed in the world? It represents a constant potential to be seen, and in being seen, the drawing itself acts architecturally. (Sretenović, 2019)

## Bibliography

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## Design Driven Research

The first part of the research **is the theoretical construction of architectural drawing as the agent of rupture** based on the relevant work of architectural theory and philosophy. In addition, the analysis will focus on the question “how drawing works?” while reviewing the history of architectural drawing. The process of reading and analyzing of existing the material comes across as conventional methodology,

however, it is design-driven, as the material will not be passively intaken but “redesigned” and decontextualized when faced with a new set of questions.

The second part will test the assumption that architectural drawing solely can change the given conditions. It will include the **organization of international architectural idea competition** on a conflicted territory (e.g. privatized former public space). The competition will consist of several steps - first, setting the task and a brief, secondly PR of the competition on relevant platforms, thirdly critical reflection on the received ideas and material and finally getting in touch with the relevant managerial structures in order to change the given conditions on the basis of ideas received which will be recorded in interviews. This is a designed process or testing ground for an agile way of practicing architecture.

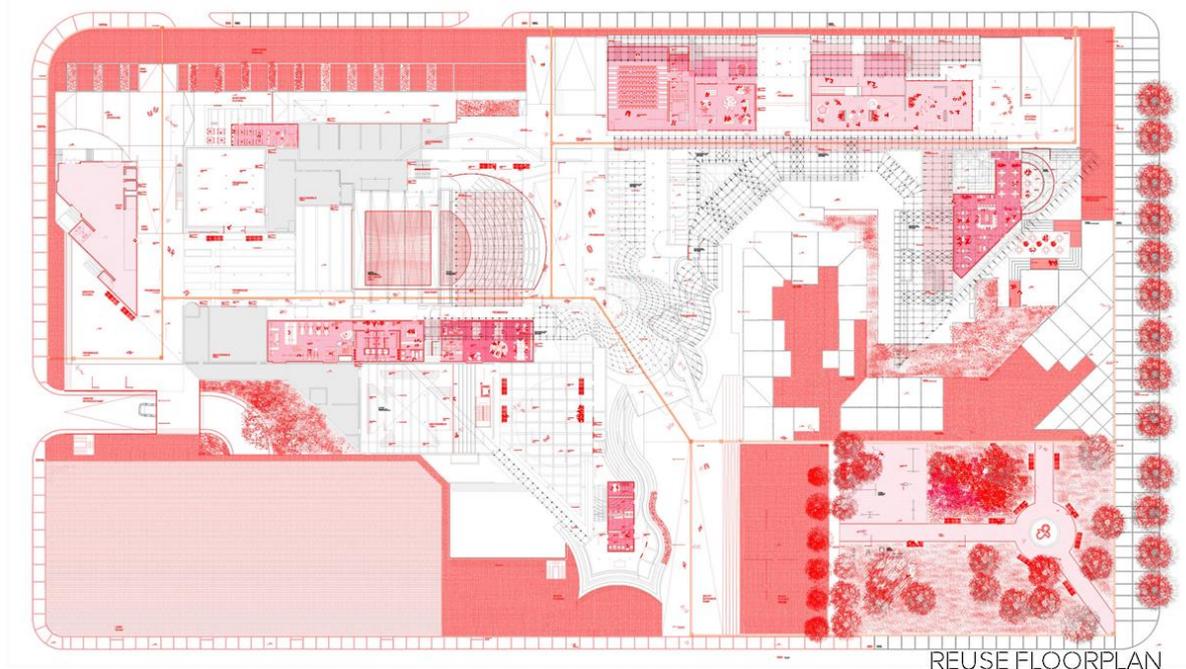
#### Key words

Architectural-Drawing, rupture, world-as-it-could-be

#### Bio

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Danica Sretenović practices architecture via concept design, graphic design, architectural theory, education, editorial and curatorial work. She studied architecture in Ljubljana (FA) and Madrid (ETSAM). She is a researcher on a project *Nonuments*, which brings to light unfit architecture that resists investor-centered spatial politics and collective ignorance. With architectural office Sadar+Vuga she exhibited at 2<sup>nd</sup> Chicago biennial. Her projects were exhibited at Galeria Vincon in Barcelona, Pavilion of Ivan Vitić, Zagreb, Mikser House, Belgrade. She published interviews with Anne Lacaton, Diebedo Francis Kere, Rintala Eggertsson, Ana Kučan among others.



Anachronistic drawing (3,5m x 2,5m). “Reuse floorplan” combines 6 decades long construction site with a reuse concept of covered public space. Home of Revolution, Nikšić. Black - architect Marko Mušič. Red - new project: Sadar+Vuga, HHH and DVARP. Drawing: Danica Sretenović, Sadar+Vuga for 2<sup>nd</sup> Chicago Biennial.